

Message

From: Jones, Jim [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=C32C4B9347004778B0A93A4CBD83FC8A-JJONES1]
Sent: 11/19/2015 7:35:13 PM
To: Enck, Judith [Enck.Judith@epa.gov]
Subject: RE: Usvi pesticides conference

Well done!

From: Enck, Judith
Sent: Thursday, November 19, 2015 12:56 PM
To: Pieh, Luseni <Pieh.Luseni@epa.gov>; Jones, Jim <Jones.Jim@epa.gov>; arnold, paul <arnold.paul@epa.gov>
Subject: Usvi pesticides conference

A huge success. We are going to do another conference in st croix Usvi in March and there are many requests for us to repeat it in Puerto Rico. We will attempt that also. Our only costs were a lot of staff time and invitational travel for two people. It was great to have Ruth Etzel speak and fully participate. See clips below

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Soltani, Beth" <Soltani.Beth@epa.gov>
Date: November 19, 2015 at 1:40:20 PM AST
To: "Enck, Judith" <Enck.Judith@epa.gov>

EPA and DPNR Aim to Tighten Regulation of Pesticide Use

VI Source

By David Knight Jr. — November 18, 2015

DPNR Commissioner Dawn Henry and EPA Region Two Administrator Judith Enck update the press at a conference on integrated pest management.

Improving regulatory control over the use of pesticides in the territory is a top priority of the Environmental Protection Agency and the V.I. Department of Planning and Natural Resources, officials from both agencies said at a press conference at the Charles W. Turnbull Regional Library on Wednesday.

DPNR Commissioner Dawn Henry and EPA Region Two Administrator Judith Enck met with members of the media as part of a conference on integrated pest management, an industry term meaning nontoxic or less toxic alternatives to pesticides.

The EPA and DPNR's Division of Environmental Protection began organizing the conference in June as a first step in changing the way the territory thinks about pest control.

The potential dangers of pesticides caught the attention of Virgin Islanders in March after a Delaware family vacationing on St. John at Sirenusa condominiums was poisoned by an illegal application of methyl bromide. Three of the four family members have permanent neurological damage as a result of their exposure to the pesticide, Enck said Wednesday. The family's two sons remain in the hospital.

An investigation revealed that the pest control company Terminix applied the methyl bromide at Sirenusa even though the highly toxic fumigant is not authorized for use within residential

structures. The EPA restricts the substance's use to a very few situations, none of which are applicable to the V.I.

"There are some limited uses," explained Enck. "For instance, strawberry fields in California, processing of smoked ham in North Carolina. And then the more common usage is in ports – big containers that are shipping flowers and fruits and vegetables – but it's a very controlled setting; it's a quarantined area that is regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. So there are a couple of applications in Puerto Rico, but none in the V.I."

Henry said that since March all methyl bromide canisters, both full and empty, have been removed from the territory.

DPNR is the agency responsible for regulating the use of pesticides locally. The agency contracts the University of the Virgin Islands' Cooperative Extension Service to provide training for pesticide applicators.

Pesticide certification courses continue to be offered by UVI, Henry said, despite reports made earlier in the year that they had ceased due to a potential misuse of grant money. DPNR maintains that a misperception was caused by the fact that the department had delayed payment to the university during the finalization of a contract.

DPNR now wants to expand and strengthen the enforcement of its permitting of pesticide applicators. Henry said the agency has drafted new applications for permits that will be required for the selling and purchasing of restricted-use pesticides.

"On the commercial side we are hoping that the distributors, persons that are selling restricted-use pesticides, will now through our permits be required to keep certain records they can present to the department on a periodic basis, so we know what the traffic is within the territory as it relates to restricted-use pesticides," said Henry.

Those on the other side of the same transactions, the buyers of pesticides, will need to be permitted by DPNR as well.

Henry said DPNR has also drafted new regulations for its pesticide program that will soon be unveiled through a public hearing process.

Regulations aren't just being tightened in the V.I., according to Enck. Just a few weeks ago, the EPA finalized new national regulations on worker protection standards that will go into effect in 2017, she said. Those regulations are designed to protect agricultural workers from the effects of pesticides. She said they have not been updated for 20 years.

According to V.I. law, training to certify pest control applicators must include the latest practices and principles of integrated pest management, the subject of Wednesday's conference.

"The whole point of integrated pest management is to get to the root of the problem," said Enck.

This partly means controlling environmental factors that draw pests, rather than eradicating them when they are at the point of infestation, she said.

"If you have a contract with a pesticide applicator where they show up every month on schedule to spray a restricted-use pesticide, that means you're not dealing with the root of the problem because the pest continues to enter."

Enck said the fact that integrated pest management is not only safer and more sustainable, but also less expensive than using pesticides, should encourage people and companies to adopt its principles.

"We really need consumers to pay attention because I think consumers are going to drive the change," she said.

Speaking at Wednesday's conference on integrated pest management were national experts in the field, including Dr. Jody Gangloff-Kaufmann of Cornell University; Timothy Madere, Special Project Manager for the City of New Orleans; Dr. Philip Landrigan of Mount Sinai Hospital; Dr. Perry Sheffield Mount Sinai School of Medicine; Dr. Ruth Etzel, the childrens' health senior advisor to EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy, and EPA senior advisor Claudia Gutierrez.

Family's poisoning leads to pesticides conference

Virgin Islands Daily News

By ASHLEY Mayrienne JONES (Daily News Staff)

November 16, 2015

Wednesday, nine months after a family was poisoned by methyl bromide on St. John, the Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Natural Resources will be co-hosting a "Reducing Pesticides in the V.I." conference to educate the hospitality sector on alternative uses for pest management.

The conference, which is the first of its kind in the Virgin Islands, is a direct response to the incident in March, in which four members of the Esmond family suffered severe medical complications after being exposed to fumes during their stay at Sirenusa, according to EPA Region 2 Regional Administrator Judith Enck.

According to Enck, three of the four family members suffered "serious neurological damage that they will probably never recover from." The two teenage boys remain in the hospital, she said, and the EPA enforcement case is ongoing.

Enck said that she and V.I. Department of Planning and Natural Resources Commissioner Dawn Henry "are very concerned and we want to make sure this does not happen again," Enck said. "There is a need to educate people."

The full-day conference will focus on integrated pest management as an alternative to toxic pesticides, said Enck, and will feature experts from around the nation.

Integrated pest management involves eliminating the pest problem at its source with preventative measures such as closing screens and cleaning up food residue, rather than reaching for a pesticide as a first option, Enck said.

Alternative measures can be applied to all pests, from termites to rodents, Enck said.

"For instance, in New York, there is a mouse problem. I could put out poison, or I could put out the tried-and-true mousetrap, and avoid using the toxic material," Enck said.

While the conference is geared towards hotels, restaurants and schools, Enck said she encourages the general public to attend the conference as well, even if for only part of the day.

"We are targeted at the hospitality sector because of what happened on St. John, but we want the general public to attend as well," she said.

Most of the time, cutting off the pests' food supply by placing trash bins further away from a building or ensuring counter tops are cleaned will greatly reduce the pest problem, Enck said.

"You don't want to be a good host for them," Enck said.

The conference will feature speeches by Enck, Henry and Gov. Kenneth Mapp.

Dr. Jody Gangloff-Kaufmann of Cornell University will speak about reducing the use of pesticides in hotels, schools and restaurants, and Timothy Madere, a special projects coordinator for the city of New Orleans, will speak about reducing pesticides in the home.

There also will be a keynote speech by well-respected physician Dr. Philip Landrigan of Mt. Sinai Hospital, who will talk about the harmful health effects of pesticides, and a speech about children's vulnerability to pesticides by Dr. Ruth Etzel, Enck said.

Other speakers include EPA Senior Advisor Claudia Gutierrez, Department of Planning and Natural Resources Director Norman Williams, and Dr. Perry Sheffield from Mount Sinai School of Medicine.

The conference will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Charles Turnbull Regional Library on St. Thomas, and is free and open to the public. Those interested in attending can register by calling 212-637-5038 or by visiting www.epa-r2-ipm.eventbrite.com.

A call to action to address climate change in the Caribbean

Issued : Wednesday, November 18, 2015 11:00 AM

By : ROSARIO FAJARDO

caribbeanbusiness.pr

Amid increasing concerns about the impact of climate change on the Caribbean region, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have signed a memorandum of understanding "geared at cementing a commitment to share expertise to address climate change in the Caribbean."

Besides sharing research and data, the agreement also includes efforts to reduce carbon emissions in both territories.

Among the climate-related issues that Puerto Rico, the USVI and other Caribbean islands have been facing in recent years include a severe drought, coral bleaching due to warmer seas and an invasion of sargassum seaweed on many beaches.

The agreement was signed during the two-day conference, "Climate change in the Caribbean," which is currently being held in San Juan.

"Climate change is impacting the Caribbean in serious ways, and we can expect more impacts in the future," said EPA Regional Administrator Judith A. Enck. "This region is extremely vulnerable to sea level rise, extreme heat events, hurricanes and drought.... We must act now and act together to address the greatest environmental challenge of our time."